

USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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PLANS FOR THE FOURTH

New Nature Trail. America's fourth nature trail for the handicapped on public lands managed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, is being planned at the Lincoln National Forest near Cloudcroft, New Mexico. The New Mexico Federation of Women's Clubs and the State School for the Blind are cooperating with the Department's Forest Service in developing a new nature trail that can bring pleasure and enlightenment to the handicapped. Target date for the trail is summer 1969. The USDA, cooperating with Civic Clubs and State and local agencies, has led in trying to bring the wonders of nature into the lives of the handicapped. The first such nature trail is located near Aspen, Colorado, in the White River National Forest. The other two trails have been constructed at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., and at the Massanutten Unit of the George Washington National Forest in Virginia.

NEW CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

A New Dimension. A new non-school food service program is being launched on a pilot basis by the School Lunch Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service. The effort is to help public and non-profit private agencies improve nutrition for children in non-school group activities. Planned on the same Federal-state-local chain that has operated through the years in school-oriented nutrition programs, the new activity was inaugurated in Gary, Indiana. Pre-school youngsters from needy homes will first benefit from the program. It opens a new door to food service for day-care children. It will also be extended to help youngsters in summer recreation programs who otherwise would not have regular meals.

NEW GROWTH IN RURAL AMERICA

Where The Action Is. Much of the noise may be in the city, but some of the action is in a revitalized rural America. Example: First-time electric service reaches some 150,000 rural consumers each year as a result of loans approved by the Rural Electrification Administration. The REA finances electric and telephone systems which play a leading role in the development of industry and recreational facilities in rural areas. More than 25 million people in 2,600 of the nation's 3,100 counties are serviced by REA borrowers. "Rural America--Growth Country" is available in limited quantities by writing to REA, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



IT PLAGUES THE HOMEOWNER

A Silent, Expensive Thief. Soil erosion is a quiet--but serious problem in suburbia. It not only hurts the land, it helps bring the U.S. a \$500-million yearly bill in sediment damage and dredging costs, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It is a needless cost. Erosion problems can be avoided. Burlap, jute matting, asphalt sprays or vegetative mulches, for example, can keep the soil in place on a construction site until grass or other plants can get a foothold and take over the job. Sediment-basins can keep mud from leaving a building site and damaging other property. If you are a land owner or operator the odds are 9 to 1 that your land is in a soil conservation district. Each district has a conservation program to fit local problems with a combination of local, state and Federal Services. Check with your local district for information on how you can prevent soil erosion on your property. Write the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, for these helpful publications: "Soil Conservation at Home: Tips for City and Suburban dwellers," 20 cents; and "Know The Soil You Build On," 15 cents.

SALAD DRESSING ANYONE?

Variety Is the Spice of Lettuce. Just imagine--there are 3,779 different brands of salad dressings on the market today according to reports by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service. Consumption of all types of manufactured salad dressing in 1940 was 2.6 pints per person--by 1966 it was up to 7.4 pints. That's quite a jump. The use of soybean oil in salad dressings has increased from 14 percent in 1943--to 80 percent in 1966.

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW CAN HURT US

Do You Get the Message? Read the label--have you heard that before? U. S. Department of Agriculture researchers have a new project at hand--checking to see if people really understand the terms on pesticide labels. Vital questions--literally--that need to be answered include--What role do illustrations, color combinations, placement of warning statements, etc., play in determining label effectiveness? What can be done to induce pesticide users to read, understand and follow protective label instructions? More than 45,000 different pesticide labels are currently registered with the Pesticides Regulation Division of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. The study will be conducted by the University of Illinois for the Department. The major points of the study are to make sure that labels are doing the best job possible.

TIPS FOR PROGRAM CHAIRMEN

Free Color Catalog Available. The U. S. Department of Agriculture now has a new slide set and filmstrip catalog available free upon request. The catalog lists 83 titles, 21 of which are new this year. The slides are of special interest to organizations, teachers and program advisors. Included in the listings is a series of presentations on housing with titles such as "Planning the Family Workroom," "Home Kitchens," "Heating and Cooling Your Home." General categories included are: Agricultural Economics, Beautification, Civil Defense, Conservation, Farming, Food, Forestry, 4-H, Home Gardening, and others. Write to the Photography Division, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please include your zipcode.

EVER SEE A GLASS COW?

Or Work With One In The Army? An experimental program to help men whose military speciality will not help them in civilian jobs is being conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Sounds far afield? Not really. The idea is to provide job skills for servicemen being discharged from active duty within six months. The glass cow is part of a study on livestock digestive systems by USDA's Agricultural Research Service. The advantage of working with a glass cow rather than a flesh-and-blood one is that scientists can observe the inside-workings. The volunteer even learns to "feed" the cow without allowing it to "swallow" air. Project transition is making a real contribution by having the military personnel volunteer for this training in Agricultural Research. Many military installations in the country are now participating in this program.

REMEMBER THE REMARKABLE RUMINANT

More on Deficits of Protein. Ruminants (beef cattle, dairy cattle and sheep) have served us admirably by converting surplus grains to high-quality protein in the form of milk, beef and lamb. These remarkable ruminants, according to U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists, have a unique capacity to utilize raw materials that cannot be utilized by humans or other animals. Ruminants can eat grasses, waste products, and chemicals such as non-protein nitrogen and convert them into highly nutritious products as well as into hides and wool for clothing. As a result, ruminants will nicely complement increases in production of vegetable proteins and fibers. They will help clothe and feed the populations of the future. And we can continue to look forward to roast beef, steaks or lambchops.

NO MORE "K" RATIONS

More Meat and Milk--Fewer Beans. Time was--we are told--that the Navy lived on gravy and the Army lived on beans. It's different now--according to Economic Research statistics by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Today's average serviceman has more variety in his meals. The famous "K" rations of World War II are long gone, and for the most part, so are the "C" rations of the Korean conflict. The military man puts away more than 200 pounds of beef, upwards of 80 pounds of pork and more than 15 pounds of veal, according to USDA reports. The average civilian takes in three pounds of lamb for the one pound that the serviceman consumes. The military man eats double the amount of turkey the civilian consumes. Shifts in food consumption patterns of the military and civilian population are listed in a new USDA report covering the past 15 years.

THE WORLD ON WHEELS

The Forest Goes to School. Fifth and Sixth graders in the Alpine School District in Utah are being visited this year by a capsule history of their forests. The story is inside a U.S. Department of Agriculture trailer housing a Forest Service mobile Visitor Information Center. Forestry officials hope students will gain a better understanding of the surrounding area through use of the trailer. One of the exhibits contains a complete story in miniature of the Uinta National Forest, demonstrating the varied uses man can make of nearby forest areas. A geology exhibit shows how the mountains in the Wasatch Range were created. And in another section students learn about the early inhabitants, explorers, and pioneers of the Utah Valley region.



BE PATIENT

Building A Better House Takes Time. Consumers will benefit from a new study by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Products Laboratory. But they'll have to wait a bit. The study, projected for a 15-year span, will provide information on various kinds of trussed rafters for home building. It is focused on longtime maintenance of both strength and stiffness. Strength is needed to carry roof sheathing, shingles and the burdens of snow and ice. Stiffness is needed to carry these loads without excessive deflection that could damage ceilings. Economy is an important factor as is the flexibility of various floor plans made possible by the different construction. Test results are determined each five years, under the plan. Copies of the initial evaluation may be obtained free on request to the Director, U. S. Forest Products Lab., P. O. Box 5130, Madison, Wisconsin 53705.

AWAY IN THE FOREST

Electronic "Necklaces." Mary's Little Lamb would carry a miniaturized radio transmitter around its neck today instead of a bell to keep track of its whereabouts. A new technique of biotelemetry helps to study the wanderings of forest animals. Successfully used in many parts of the country by cooperating Forestry schools working with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, biotelemetry is a method used to study the devastating effects of animal appetites for virgin timber. Studies have been made in cooperation with the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife on monitoring the movements and behavior of gourmandizing animals. The importance of the problem is best understood by the figures, such as, one adult snowshoe hare can cut 100 Douglas fir seedlings in an acre in one night. One deer mouse can consume 350 seeds nightly. Private timber interests estimate that wildlife damage amounts to 12 to 15 million dollars annually in the Douglas fir region of the northwest alone.

PUBLICATIONS

The new Handbook of Agricultural Charts, 1968 by the U. S. Department of Agriculture is the chart story of U. S. agriculture--from farm inputs to world trade. This reference book for economists and agribusinessmen has data in 157 charts, with supporting tables, on the general economy, farm commodities, foreign agricultural trade, marketing, farm population, and on family levels of living. All of the charts are available at cost, individually or in full series. Single copies of the Handbook of Agricultural Charts, 1968 AH-359, are available free, on post-card request, from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please include your zipcode.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING TIME

Pick the Plentifuls. Entertaining? Planning for the holidays? Select from the U. S. Department of Agriculture's list of plentiful foods to make your shopping easier and lighter on the budget. Broiler-fryers, prunes, oranges, and grapefruit, turkeys, onions, dry beans, canned tomatoes and tomato products are on the plentiful food list.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It's designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information contact: Editor of SERVICE, Office of Information, Washington, D.C. 20250.